

**National Transportation Safety Board
Washington, DC 20594**

Brief of Accident

Adopted 12/06/2002

DEN02LA099		08/20/2002		Erie, CO		Aircraft Reg No. N219DF		Time (Local): 10:45 MDT			
Make/Model:		Hildebrandt / Rutan/Defiant				Fatal		Serious		Minor/None	
Engine Make/Model:		Lycoming / O-360-A1A		Crew		0		0		1	
Aircraft Damage:		Substantial		Pass		0		0		1	
Number of Engines:		1									
Operating Certificate(s):		None									
Type of Flight Operation:		Personal									
Reg. Flight Conducted Under:		Part 91: General Aviation									
Last Depart. Point:		Same as Accident/Incident Location				Condition of Light:		Day			
Destination:		Walsenburg, CO				Weather Info Src:		Weather Observation Facility			
Airport Proximity:		On Airport				Basic Weather:		Visual Conditions			
Airport Name:		Tri-County				Lowest Ceiling:		8000 Ft. AGL, Broken			
Runway Identification:		15				Visibility:		10.00 SM			
Runway Length/Width (Ft):		4700 / 60				Wind Dir/Speed:		070 / 010 Kts			
Runway Surface:		Concrete				Temperature (°C):		30			
Runway Surface Condition:		Dry				Precip/Obscuration:		None / None			
Pilot-in-Command		Age: 36		Flight Time (Hours)							
Certificate(s)/Rating(s)						Total All Aircraft:		574			
Private; Multi-engine Land; Single-engine Land						Last 90 Days:		10			
Instrument Ratings						Total Make/Model:		20			
None						Total Instrument Time:		73			

The pilot was taking off on runway 15. Power was applied to the rear engine, followed by power application to the forward engine. The airplane accelerated "slower than usual" and when the airplane was halfway down the runway, the pilot rejected the takeoff because he "couldn't rotate the airplane...it seemed to require more back pressure...it didn't seem right." Power was retarded to idle and brakes applied, but they didn't seem to have any effect. The airplane went off the end of the runway and traveled 500 feet across rough terrain, collapsing the nose landing gear and bending its fairing, and crushing the "Rhino" rudder and engine cowling. The propeller was also bent. A dowel from the left wheel pant was found about halfway down the runway.

Brief of Accident (Continued)

DEN02LA099

File No. 12522

08/20/2002

Erie, CO

Aircraft Reg No. N219DF

Time (Local): 10:45 MDT

Occurrence #1: ON GROUND/WATER ENCOUNTER WITH TERRAIN/WATER

Phase of Operation: TAKEOFF - ABORTED

Findings

1. ABORTED TAKEOFF - ATTEMPTED - PILOT IN COMMAND
2. (C) LANDING GEAR,NORMAL BRAKE SYSTEM - FAILURE
3. (F) AIRSPEED - LOW

Findings Legend: (C) = Cause, (F) = Factor

The National Transportation Safety Board determines the probable cause(s) of this accident as follows.

failure of the normal braking system, resulting in the airplane departing the end of the runway. A contributing factor was the airplane's slow acceleration during the takeoff roll.